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DD/P-7-4/27.5

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

Memorandum of Conversation

DATE: 20 August 1963

11:45 - 12:00

SUBJECT : Content of BONN 5026

PARTICIPANTS: Thomas Hughes, Director, Intelligence & Research, Dept. of State  
Chief, EE/Germany

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1. The meeting with Mr. Hughes was at my request to brief him on the content of BONN 5026 as follow up to the meeting with Chief, EE on 15 July 1963.

2. At the end of the report of the substance of the Bonn cable Mr. Hughes asked why we thought that the Chancellor would not force Gehlen's resignation since it appeared to Mr. Hughes that this could be done with somewhat greater ease in view of the "adopted status of the child". I replied that we had only one conclusion which was shared by the Ambassador. Mr. Hughes asked whether we thought that the meeting of 17 August with the Chancellor closed the Gehlen matter as far as Embassy involvement is concerned and whether the meeting of 17 August was handled to our satisfaction. In reply to the part of the question, I replied that we hoped and thought so since the Chancellor has by now departed for Caddenabia and would return to Bonn only about two weeks before the change of the government and that there are a number of more important issues than Gehlen at the moment. In regards to the second part of the question, I stated that we would have preferred if there had been no meeting, but since the Chancellor had again taken the initiative and it had not been possible to refuse to discuss the matter we are satisfied that the subject had been handled most satisfactorily.

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3. The final two points raised by Mr. Hughes concerned Defense Minister von Hassel's position vis-a-vis the BND and the reemergence of former Defense Minister Strauss. I replied that we had no reading at this time on von Hassel's attitude toward Gehlen and the BND. In regards to Strauss I stated that in my view Strauss is simply pushing his return to a position of policy influence. Being the man he is, he is little if at all bothered by criticism of his previous and current actions and activities, and feels that he knows better than anybody else what is good for Germany.

4. At the end of the meeting Mr. Hughes requested to be kept informed of any further developments regarding the BND, particularly those with political overtones and possible consequences for the Embassy. He also stated that he would inform Mr. Richard Davis of the substance of our discussion and he thought that no further action in the Department was necessary.

Chief, EE/Germany

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